

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUBJECT LEADERS' NEWSLETTER

For Primary and Secondary Schools  
Summer Term 2024

### Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the summer term edition of the RE Newsletter. I hope that you are enjoying all that the summer term is bringing - apart, I suspect, from the weather! I feel in desperate need of some sunshine and dry weather after what feels like a long and wet winter. How about you? There is so much to celebrate and look forward to at this time of year - residentials, SAT's (!), summer performances, outdoor learning, sports days and so much more besides. I like to think of it as a time of hope, of optimism as the days lengthen and we can enjoy the outdoors.

I am always struck by the sense of hope in so many of the faiths and worldviews that we teach in RE. Recently I heard a local Muslim leader at Eid being interviewed. He described the hope and positivity he feels once Ramadan is over. He saw Eid as being a time of new beginnings, of hope for a better future. Christian teaching also picks up on this theme of hope so often. Easter, I guess, is the ultimate message of hope in the Christian faith. In these days when there is so much to challenge us and our wellbeing, I trust that we can look at those hopeful signs in our school communities and draw strength from those, especially on those days when we feel most challenged.

In this newsletter we have an exciting announcement to make - the appointment of an RE Adviser. Alongside this is a feature on the launch of the diocesan RE syllabus. Both of these I hope, will give you a sense of hope and optimism as we look increasingly for ways to resource and deliver amazing RE.

I wish you all a happy and healthy term and look forward to seeing you soon.  
All good wishes  
Jane

**Jane Lewis**

**Assistant Diocesan Director of Education**

SIAMS, RE and Collective Worship Adviser - Diocese of Peterborough

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## Introducing our newly appointed Diocesan RE adviser

Many of you will know that we have been carrying out a recruitment process for the position of RE Adviser. Funding for the post was agreed some time ago and we have advertised, interviewed and appointed to the role. We are delighted that **Ziggy Brown**, currently teaching at St Mary's CE Primary School, Kettering, has been appointed. Ziggy will begin her role on September 1<sup>st</sup>. She will be working 4 days a week. Here she introduces herself to us:

'Hello all,

I am so excited to have been appointed RE Adviser for the Church of England Schools of the Peterborough Diocese. I am looking forward to working with you from September and seeing all the fantastic RE provision in the Diocese. I want to champion everything we do well and facilitate sharing good practice to help us all to deliver the best RE for our pupils.

Let me introduce myself. My brothers would tell you I have been a teacher all my life as they were the, often unwilling, participants in my classroom playtimes since childhood. But I started my professional life as a secondary French teacher in 2000 and enjoyed sharing my native language and culture with 11- to 18-year-olds for 14 years, going on to middle leadership as an NQT mentor, head of year, head of house and assistant head of department. During that time, I married Robert, had two beautiful boys, Theo (now 22) and Luca (nearly 20) and I became a worship leader at the church of Christ the King, Kettering. In 2014, I took a break from full time work and became a supply teacher. I eventually took a supply post at St Mary's Primary, Kettering, fell in love with primary, got the permanent post and discovered RE teaching. As a committed Christian I was involved in worship straight away and soon after, started leading RE. Because of the way the French education system works, I never received Religious Education myself, but I was fascinated to find out more about other religions as I was starting to teach them to my students. Understanding the impact of beliefs on the lives and choices of believers opened a new, more compassionate perspective for me. This ignited a passion for the subject that encouraged me to keep up with the latest studies and implement the latest recommended practice in my school.

In the last year, we received the Gold Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) and a glowing SIAMS inspection report. Upscaling from my experience of one school to the hundred that make our diocese will certainly be a challenge, but I look forward to working on that together with Peter, Jane and all of you.'

Blessings,  
Ziggy Brown

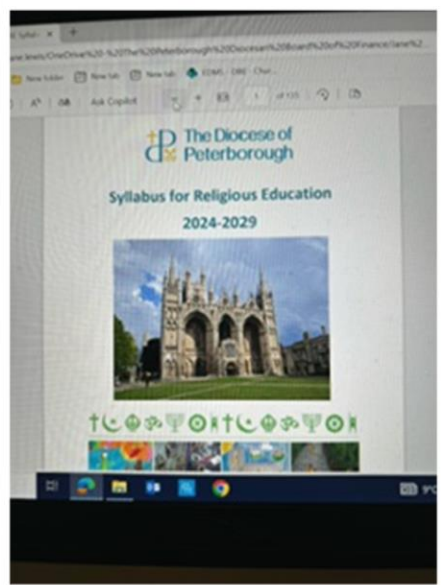
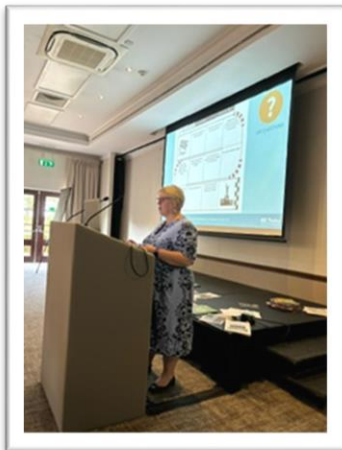
As a diocesan education team we welcome Ziggy, and look forward to working with her!

## Launch of the Diocesan Syllabus for RE 2024 - 2029



It was fantastic to welcome over 100 people - RE leaders, head teachers and DSC's - to the launch of the Diocesan Syllabus for RE, on Tuesday April 30<sup>th</sup>, at the Kettering Park Hotel.

We were introduced to changes in the syllabus by Stephen Pett from RE Today who has written the syllabus for us. This was followed by Stephen and Fiona Moss (also RE Today) introducing a new Hindu unit and talking through some generic teaching and learning ideas for the classroom to enrich our RE teaching. Fiona took us through some ways we might plan the curriculum to ensure that 'it makes sense' to our pupils.



Do please let us know of any further training/support you would like us to provide as you implement the syllabus in your schools.



## CPD Opportunities

Dates for your Diary			
Course	Date and Time	Venue	Trainer
Learning about non-religious worldviews	Thursday 23rd May 1.00pm - 3.15pm	Via Zoom	RE Today
Primary RE leaders network meeting	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> June 4.15pm - 5.30pm	Via Zoom	Jane Lewis
4-7 RE Evidence and Achievement	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> June 1.00pm - 3.15pm	Via Zoom	RE Today
Greater Depth in Primary RE	Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 1.00pm - 3.15pm	Via Zoom	RE Today

For further details, costs and bookings please go to the website:

<http://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/news-and-events/events?tags=school>

or contact Alex on 01604 887060 or e-mailing: [education@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:education@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

### National Association of Teachers of RE Courses

For all NATRE courses go to:

<http://www.natre.org.uk/> and click on "Courses and Events".

## RE Training

Over the year, 11 teachers from Church schools in the diocese have met on 3 occasions for the **'Understanding Christianity' training**. This takes place for a day each term. Across the sessions RE leaders explore the resource in more depth and especially from the perspective of leading the subject. There are 6 modules and teachers need to attend all 3 training sessions. The first two modules explore the material more specifically then moving on in modules 3 & 4 to consider how the material can be best used in the classroom to ensure a balance of the three strands of RE - theology, philosophy and social science - believing, thinking and living. These 2 modules help RE leaders to reflect on how they can support teachers in their schools in delivering the best quality RE through this resource. In the final 2 modules there is opportunity to reflect on the RE curriculum in school more broadly and how



**'Understanding Christianity'** fits into that wider RE curriculum, ensuring the requirements of the diocesan syllabus and the locally agreed syllabi are met. Assessment of RE, using the diocesan prepared 'hexagons' approach is also covered. Finally, there is opportunity to consider the wider use of the resource in terms of whole school RE days, linking to collective worship and creating a school 'Big Frieze'.

Here are some comments from those attending the training in 2023/24!

The whole  
'Understanding  
Christianity' resource now  
makes perfect sense!

An understanding of  
Christianity as a 'big  
story' has been  
enlightening!

This course has  
massively increased my  
confidence in delivering  
RE in the classroom.

The course has  
helped my  
understanding  
so much. I have  
been able to  
support my  
colleagues so  
much more now  
that I am more  
secure with the  
resource. I have  
implemented a  
lot of ideas  
already.

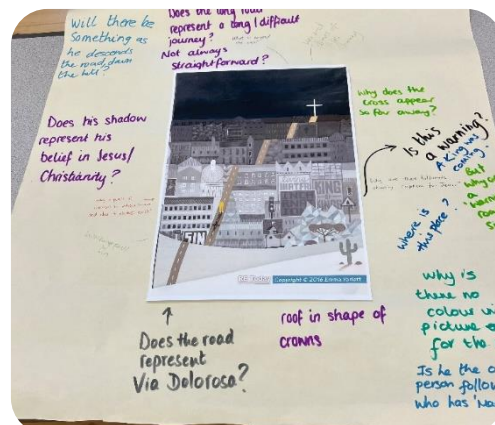
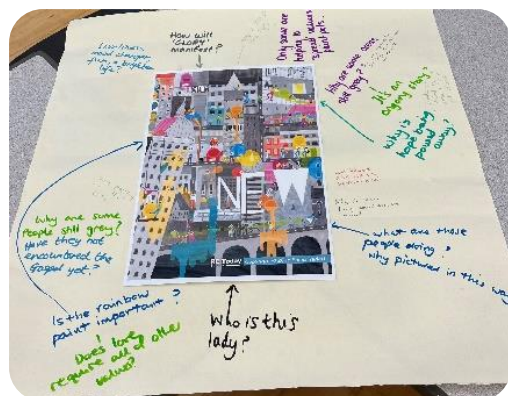
The course really  
supported my subject  
knowledge and linked  
really clearly and  
practically to  
Understanding  
Christianity, which all  
teachers in school are  
using.

It has been invaluable to  
revisit and reinforce my  
knowledge further and to  
look at new aspects and  
new ideas.

I have a better  
understanding of the  
resource now and the  
planning, so I know I can  
support staff better.



This is a course that is run each year. Why not sign up to join it next year? This would be especially beneficial to teachers new to leading RE but even if you have led RE for some time this course will serve as good way of developing your skills as RE leader. Look out for dates for next year in the training programme.



## New to leading RE

Only a very small number signed up to attend this training (even though we know there are more than this number of new RE leaders in our schools!) so the course was moved from face to face to zoom. The course enabled participants to consider the role of RE leader, the importance of creating an RE policy that links to the vision of the school as well as what makes good RE in the classroom and how we can know how well children are learning in RE.

## Training with RE Today

We are delighted that RE Today is part of our training offer each year. It is a shame that on some occasions the numbers attending have been small. These courses are easy to access. They take place on Zoom and usually last for around 1 ½ hours so there is plenty of time to do other things around it. Some of the courses are in the morning and others in the afternoon so it is flexible for everyone to join. Over the spring term Lat Blaylock led a session on 'Ideas for teaching Holy Week and Easter' which left teachers astounded with the number of ideas they could take away to use in the classroom! Ian Nicholson, who is a new RE Today Adviser, led a session to help us understand the implications of the Ofsted Research Review into RE.



Research and analysis  
**Research review series: religious education**

Published 12 May 2021

We received so many brilliant ideas from Lat for teaching Holy Week and Easter. I took them into the classroom and they really enhanced the children's learning. Thank you.

I've enjoyed every aspect of this afternoon. Lots of great ideas, which will really engage the children.

I have 'done' Easter during my teaching career which now spans several decades. What else is there to know?! It's always great to have an injection of vivacity with a couple of hours of brilliance from Lat. It gives a new perspective, lots of super ideas and the impetus to re-evaluate 'excellence' in RE learning. A really enjoyable and useful session - thank you!

An injection of "Oomph" into teaching Easter in RE. I'm just off to immediately create an Easter display using one of Lat's ideas, to initiate discussion and thoughts from the children across the whole school during this term.

Ofsted and the Improvement of RE  
It was great- thank you. Challenging and thought provoking. Good opportunities for discussion and deepening our own knowledge.

There will be further opportunities through the year to benefit from the training offered by RE Today. This training is always on zoom so is very accessible. Please see page 4 of this newsletter for news of what is coming up in the remainder of the summer term.

We are currently negotiating with RE Today for next year's programme, so please look out for those events in the Training Brochure for 2024-25.



## Sharing Great Ideas! Around our schools

**Kate Joubert from Barnack CE Primary School** sent the following article which arrived just a little too late to appear in the spring term newsletter.

Kingsgate Community Church Prayer Space Event at Barnack CE Primary School. 'At the end of November, Kingsgate Community Church joined our school for a prayer space event. This was a fantastic opportunity to develop our spirituality, where all children and adults of Christian faith, other faith or those of no faith could spend time reflecting and asking questions. It was an immersive experience and started as soon as we were asked to take our shoes off before entering the room. This set the scene for a calming environment. We were asked to whisper and this allowed us a quiet time out of our busy school day to think about our lives and the world.

Some of the prayer space activities involved included:

**Big Questions** An opportunity for pupils to ask big questions, about God, the world and faith. With the prompt of "If you could ask God one question what would it be?"

**Fizzy Forgiveness** People do things that hurt us, even if they say sorry it can be difficult to forgive them. This activity allowed children to think about forgiveness, and drop a fizzy tablet into some water. As the tablet fizzed away, they imagined the hurt fizzing away.

**Heavens Above** A dark tent was set up with lights and glow in the dark stars, pupils entered and laid down gazing up, imagining the stars we see at night. This allowed pupils to think about how big the universe is and appreciate the world that we live in.

**Reflection Ribbons** There are things that happen in our world that we just don't understand. Like

wars, natural disasters and terrorist attacks. This gave pupils space to reflect on these events and ask some questions. Who has been hurt? Who is helping? Who do you think caused this?

**Aqua Beads** This helped pupils to think about what things worry them and then let go of their worries. This might not mean that the





thing that is causing the worry goes away, but that they are not letting it build up inside.

**Hand Written** We are all individuals, and we are also part of a bigger community. Putting their name on the palm of a hand showed that we are all part of something greater than ourselves and that Christians believe that God knows everyone and in the Bible it says that He has their name written on his hand.

The children found the experience really calming and enjoyed the whole atmosphere.

**"I liked it because it was something new. I really enjoyed the aqua beads, because they felt squishy! The whole experience was very calming & I enjoyed the opportunity to think deeply in a quiet space."**

**"I enjoyed the water fizzy thing because it was satisfying watching the rock fading away our worries."**



It was a brilliant session that provided some real 'wow' moments. We would highly recommend this event to anyone and would certainly welcome them back on another occasion ourselves!

**Val Griffiths. Headteacher at St Andrew's, Northampton** has sent this article about their world faith day in the spring term.

'For our Spring World Faith focus we took time to investigate Christianity as a world faith. We did this by focusing on the symbol of the cross and how this is represented around the world.

We started the afternoon in every year group by asking the question, 'Are Christians in the UK different to Christians in other countries? Conversations were had about language difference and different styles of worship before children were guided to discuss what similarities Christians share. A love of God and Jesus were identified, as were the celebrations from the Christian calendar that people around the world honour.

Teachers then supported the children to consider the symbols that Christians use to show their faith or to use in their worship. Children were asked to explain the symbolism of the Cross and discuss why it is so important to Christians. This linked with our collective worship focus of Easter.

We then did an activity which involved each class taking a deeper look at the cross symbol used in different cultures. These included European, African, Asian, American and Oceanic examples. Each cross was linked to a biblical quotation and age-appropriate discussions were held around this. A history or background of the cross was shared and children were then asked to create a version of the cross from the country they had been

discussing. They looked at globes and maps to see how Christianity covers the world in its following.

Every child in school created a cross, which we have now displayed in our entrance areas as a reminder that our school is part of a network of world-wide Christianity.'



**Loddington CE Primary School** been exploring more about what their school vision means to them. **Helen Dowsett** has sent the following article to share. 'Here at Loddington CE Primary School, our vision is underpinned by the bible verse John 10:10. Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life and have it in all its fullness." On Thursday 15th February 2024, we explored this verse in each class and as a school in worship.

We began our thinking by looking at pictures of shepherds from all over the world, we explored the role of a shepherd and the qualities a shepherd may possess. The children were able to identify how our school values could be qualities of a good shepherd. We then linked this to our school vision, where we looked at the quote in context and explored the meaning behind the Bible passage. The children were brilliant with this discussion and were able to understand the deeper messages behind our vision which enables them to lead a full life. The children then went to church with Reverend Andy and explored our vision even further through drama.'





**Burton Latimer CE Primary School** have sent this news about their Easter celebration which linked to learning about crosses!

**Tracey Sanders** writes 'St. Mary's CE Primary Academy, Burton Latimer continued their tradition of celebrating Easter in our local church of the same name. All of our children and families enjoy taking the time to celebrate our services in the church. The children from across the school celebrated the Easter story with poetry, dance, singing performances and art. Years 3 and 4 retold the story of Easter using the three crosses. This coincided with their learning in our R.E. day "Why do Christians call the day Jesus died Good Friday?" (from Understanding Christianity). The children learnt about the three parts as mirrored in the three crosses and added their reflections. We then took these to church to share with the community. The Palm cross included reflections from the children of what they, or Christians might say to Jesus if they could meet him at the famous entry to Jerusalem. Our second cross, was filled with hearts of gratitude and the third cross was filled with anchors of hope.

The photos are of the three crosses the children created with some of their reflections.'







linked to our work in RE, from EYFS to Year 6, and involved the Church, Governors and all school staff.

The depth of commitment to the Church-School collaboration is always reflected in the planning behind the activities. Heather shared all activities, and involved everyone in the planning process. On the day before, there was involvement from so many stakeholders of the Church and School communities, to ensure that every activity was planned so creatively and meaningfully. When I arrived at the Church after work on Tuesday, it already looked amazing, and we should never underestimate how much work goes on 'behind the scenes'. When Heather asked me to 'create a tomb', I did not hesitate- she had already provided so many materials to enable this, and her commitment to every aspect of involvement within the school is so evident- it is a truly valued partnership, and the benefits are felt from all involved. I think this really emphasises the importance, particularly within Church of England Primary Schools, of collaboration with the Church as a natural part of the school curriculum. The prayer stations enabled all pupils to deepen their understanding of each aspect of the Easter Story. Reverend Heather Lowe shared her thoughts on the importance of the Prayer Stations:

"It was wonderful to be able to create and use the "Experience Easter" stations in our church to help our church school children think a little more deeply and reflectively about the Christian story, than they might otherwise have had the opportunity to do. It was a real privilege and I am very grateful to Mr Jones, the teachers and the governors for allowing the church to work alongside the school in this way. The Easter Story is not an easy story for children to focus on but is important to a Christian understanding of love, faith and hope. Ultimately, it's all about good news.

We are not a large church, but lots of the church family contributed props for the stations, helped create the stations or got involved with the children reading them the different parts of the Easter Story and helping them to engage with different aspects of the stations, including praying "by the cross", if they wished to do so. It took a great deal of time, energy and effort on the part of many, but we all felt it was well worth it. Huge thanks, for all you do and all your hard work."



**Sandy continues** - I absolutely endorse Heather's feelings- "it was well worth it", at every level, and enabled all children to deepen their understanding of every aspect of the Easter story.

This session in the church really strengthened the children's knowledge and understanding, and enabled the children to respond in calm and reflective ways. Everyone involved felt very emotionally invested, and the responses of the children absolutely reflected this.

*"I really understand the story now. It has helped me to think more deeply about the love that Jesus showed, and it has made me think about the importance of being kind and caring to others."*

At the **'HOPES AND DREAMS- Palm Sunday'** activity, the children created stones to reflect their feelings: *"The stones show that the feelings of people just confirmed what was right. There was a greater cause than the feelings of one person"*.



*"The stones show the depth of feeling about Jesus."*



**'REMEMBER ME'**- at the Last Supper.

The children were invited to take their place at the table and to think of special objects that helped them to remember important times in their lives. They learnt about the special time when Jesus shared bread and wine with his friends as his last supper, and they shared bread as they thought about this special part of the story.

**'THE SERVANT KING'**

As the children sat on chairs around this station, they considered the words 'servant' and 'king'. They make us think of different types of people and yet Jesus himself is often referred to as 'The Servant King'. The children reflected on why this is the case, and talked about the part of the story where Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. They considered the words of Jesus when he said, "I have set you an example...", and shared the prayer of St Teresa of Avila.



*Christ has no body now on earth but yours;  
Yours are the only hands with which he can do his work,  
Yours are the only feet with which he can go about the world,  
Yours are the only eyes through which his compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world.*

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

### 'ALONE' at the Garden of Gethsemane

The children considered the loneliness felt by Jesus, and learnt more about the part of the story when he was alone in the garden. They each made a figure from plasticine of someone who is important to them, to stop them from feeling lonely.

They also created prayers at the 'King of the Jews' station and held quiet reflection in response to this part of the story.



### RESURRECTION- The Empty Tomb

After telling the children the story of Mary Magdalene and two other women visiting the tomb where Jesus' body had been laid, we asked the children at the "Resurrection" scene, "can you think of any words to describe how the women might have felt when they realised the tomb was empty and they heard the angel's news?". Responses included: R, Y1, Y2: "Sad, worried, happy, surprised, shocked, scared, confused, petrified, excited, hopeful..."

KS2: "Relieved, shocked, amazed, startled, confused- had they walked into the wrong tomb? Nervous, disbelieving, overwhelmed, hopeful- this was definitely a 'wow' moment!"

The children's responses within all year groups showed such thoughtfulness and reflective understanding.





Mr Jones, head teacher, really values the collaboration between the school and the church.

*"The prayer stations undoubtedly helped to deepen the children's understanding of all aspects of the Easter story, and all year groups enjoyed the calm, reflective activities. As always, we were very proud of the respectful, thoughtful responses from all of our children."*

The activities in the Church were memorable for all. Again, we benefitted from involvement from the Church community, governors and staff, and Heather's creative approach led to such memorable experiences and outcomes for all involved.



**Rachelle Heard**, from **Hayfield Cross CE Primary School** has sent this item about the Easter prayer space activities held at the school just before Easter.



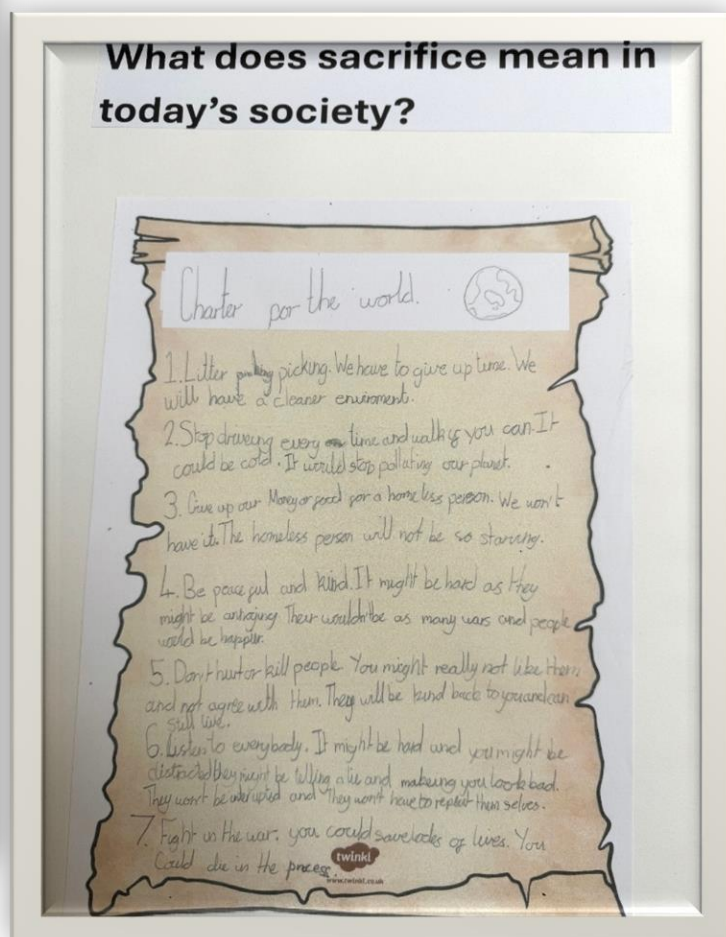
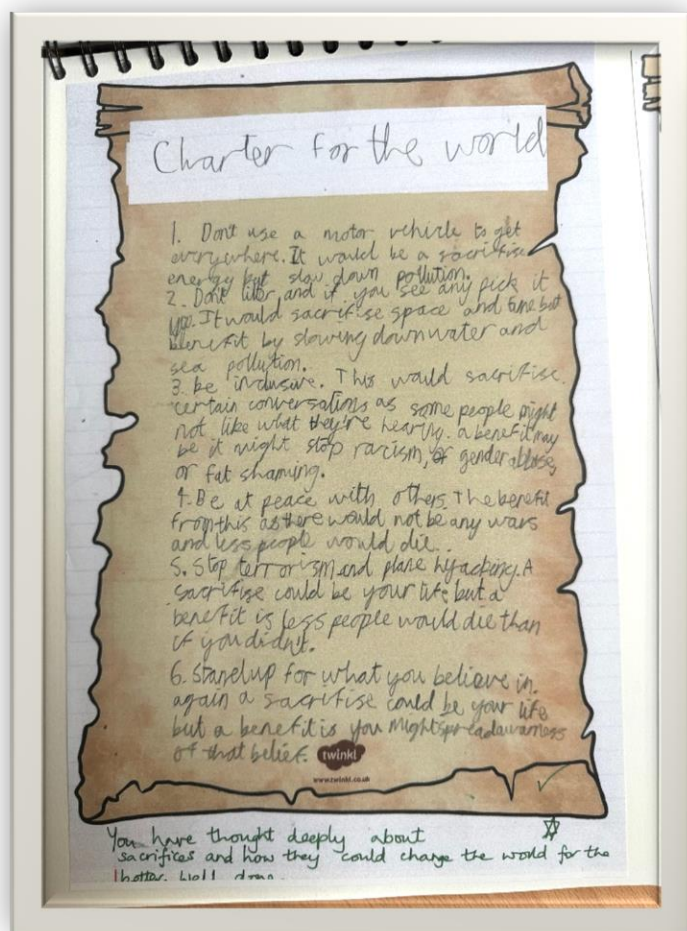
'In the last week of term, pupils took part in a carousel of Easter Prayer Space activities. These were created to invite the children to reflect on, and engage with, the Easter story in a fresh way. The children worked in small mixed-age groups and visited twelve 'stations'. They completed a variety of Bible study, prayer and craft activities which helped them to reflect on the events of Easter and encouraged them to

express their thoughts and feelings, ask questions and focus on Jesus. We also enjoyed taking part in a competition run by the Spiritual Ambassadors, giving children the opportunity to create an Easter garden or Easter bonnet.'





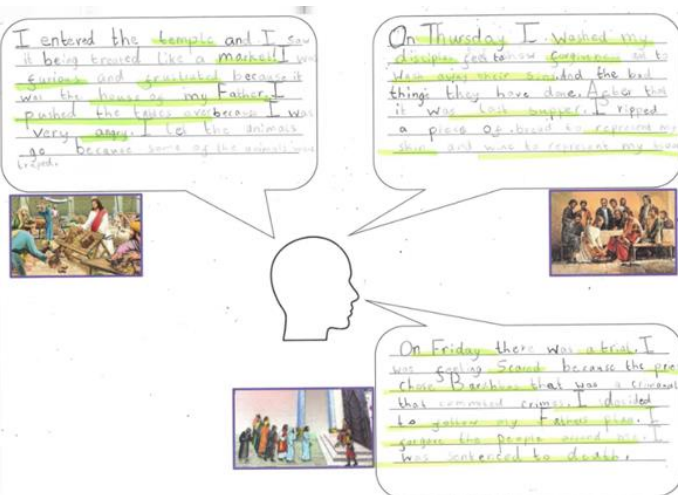
Anne Faulkner, RE leader at Brackley CE Junior School has sent the following work from 2 pupils in Year 5. They were answering the Big Question "What does sacrifice mean in today's society?" They were also invited to make connections between the sacrifice Jesus made for humanity, to repair their relationship with God, and the sacrifices we, as humans, might have to make to improve the world around us today.



Monika Lazarska, RE leader at St James' CE Primary School has sent the following article showing how the school linked together their RE learning about Easter, with wider school celebration of Easter.

'At St James we spent the most wonderful week celebrating Holy Week in the lead up to Easter.

In RE lessons, children across the school have been learning about the events that lead to Easter and they have reflected on the meaning and impact of them on their own lives. The children from year 2 to year 6 concluded the unit of Salvation, by creating composite tasks in their assessment books.



Connections - What is the most important lesson you have learnt from the Easter story? Why?

I've learnt that forgiveness is an important value. Jesus forgave our sins. He built a bridge to his Father's Kingdom because he died on the cross. Jesus died on the cross to wash away our sins. He forgave the people that crucified him.

**Year 2 - Why does Easter matter to Christians? A story told from perspective of Jesus, focusing on emotions, and why he had to die on the cross.**

### Year 6 - What difference does the Resurrection make for Christians?

The children looked at the lives of Christians whose belief in salvation influenced the way they lived their lives. They answered the following question after learning about Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu and Corrie Ten Boom. How might a Christian's belief in salvation impact on the way they live their life?



During this week, some children took part in our termly Eucharist service, either receiving Holy Communion or a blessing led by our incumbent, Rev Sue from St James Church.





The pupils in year 3 performed a version of the Easter story to parents and the school. The play, called, "Three Trees" was led by Mrs Mousir-Harrison.

The children created their own costumes and props and took on speaking and singing roles. The story is about 3 trees that are growing on a hillside. Each tree has a dream: the first wants to be a treasure chest holding gold and jewels, the second wants to be a mighty ship carrying kings across the ocean and the third simply wants to stay on the hillside where people can look up to her and see God. All 3 get chopped down and the first tree becomes a feeding trough where Jesus was laid (Christmas story) the second becomes a fishing boat where Jesus calmed a storm and the third is left in the yard as beams. The third tree becomes Jesus' cross. The children thoroughly enjoyed learning the songs and dancing with axes and ribbons. Their knowledge of the Easter story and the calming of the storm was incredible. They were able to rewrite the story in English and tell Aaron about the miracle of Jesus calming the storm in church.



On the last day of term, children from St James took part in an Easter Service at St James church with our lay reader, Aaron. We lifted the roof celebrating Easter with enthusiastic singing. Children from year 6 read passages from the book, "Easter: What is it All About?" which explains the meaning of each part of the Easter story and why it is an important celebration for Christians. What a fantastic week to finish the term and prepare for Easter at home with our families

**Thank you to all those contributors to the newsletter this term. It is always wonderful to receive the items you send and to inspire one another with such great practice.**

## National RE News

### RE in the 2023 SIAMS Framework

Across the diocese we have continued to have amazing comments made about RE in our schools. There is much to celebrate! If you are waiting for a SIAMS either this term, or next year, you might like to consider the following as you prepare.

- Is our RE curriculum sequenced so that it makes sense to the children?
- Do we have the balance of Christianity, other faiths and worldviews (yes, there is a lot to fit in!)
- Are we supporting children to appreciate and understand a diversity of belief and practice across Christianity (or Christians)
- Have we made it clear that we are looking at Christians, Muslims, Jews, Sikhis, Hindus so we can help children understand the diversity within each religion?
- Is CPD a priority? How is training undertaken by the RE leader shared with other staff?
- In a VA (or formally VA) do we have clear evidence of the progress and attainment of pupils? How do these outcomes match with other subject outcomes?

### RE Hubs

Have you used the RE Hub yet?

<https://www.re-hubs.uk/>

The content of the website is growing! There are 4 main themes for the hub: Equip, Link, Grow, Resource. The website lists courses and events, how to find a local RE teachers group, finding places of interest for school visits, school speakers, ECT/NQT focus, news and blogs and ways to get involved.

The areas of the website that are likely to be most useful are the ones that list places to visit and visitors. Listed for our region currently are:

#### ***Places of Interest***

- *Leicester Secular Society*
- *The Open Centre, Derby*
- *St Philips Centre, Leicester*

#### ***School speakers***

- *Jo-Elijah Sigston - Judaism*
- *Humanists UK*
- *Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal OBE - Islam (the website doesn't make clear exact location of this speaker so teachers need to check)*

We know there are others who visit have personal contact with. Do

your schools that some of you please share with us who these



people are and how they can be contacted. We often receive requests from schools about speakers or visits, especially linked to Islam and Hinduism, and it would be good to recommend.

Can you also encourage these people to sign up to joining the network promoted on the RE Hub website?

Speakers and organisations/places of worship need to obtain accreditation to be included on the lists.

Anyone interested in accreditation should contact

[marketing@regionalhubs.co.uk](mailto:marketing@regionalhubs.co.uk)

## OFSTED Subject report 2024

This report is new! The most recent Ofsted report that impacts on RE. Whilst Church schools prioritise RE and recognise the importance of it, it is worth noting some of the outcomes from the report.

- The RE curriculum should be taught to ALL pupils
- Content and concepts should be identified and sequenced
- There should be balance, breadth and depth to the taught curriculum
- Developing 'Ways of Knowing' is key
- There should be high expectations of what pupils can achieve
- The taught curriculum should enable pupils to appreciate the complexity and diversity of religion and worldviews
- Assessment should be manageable
- Teachers should be developing their subject knowledge through CPD
- 'A strong RE curriculum is important for pupils' cultural development' (Martin Oliver)



## Resources

### NATRE

There are many amazing resources from NATRE! Take a look at the website

[www.natre.org.uk](http://www.natre.org.uk)

**A resource from NATRE (National Association of teachers of RE)** has been produced to help schools deal with the topic of religious bullying. There are 5 x 60 minute lessons for primary and secondary schools plus resources and films on which to base teaching within lessons. They can be found here:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/about->

[natre/projects/anti-bullying](https://www.natre.org.uk/projects/anti-bullying)

## Springs Dance Company -

Are now booking:

- **PARABLE** - Touring June - July 2024. This is a **curriculum-based interactive performance and workshop** that reimagines religious stories based on the parables that Jesus told. Adventurous, interactive and exciting, children will encounter and overcome creative challenges, accomplish tasks and influence the outcome of the performance, whilst absorbed in a vibrant world of professional movement, dance and theatre.
- **The Good Samaritan** - Based on one of the Parables that Jesus told, these workshops provide opportunities for children to explore the importance of helping others and standing up for them, even if they are not like you. The workshops touch on themes of living in a multi-racial / multi-religious society.
- **You Are Special** - Based on Max Lucado's book of the same title, these workshops tackle the big issue of self-esteem and create opportunities for the children to discuss ideas about self-worth and how we treat others.

Other popular workshops include *Creation* and *A Christmas Story: Refugee* (if you're looking further ahead). Further details on all of our work for schools can be found at: <https://springsdancecompany.org.uk/join-in/> To book and to find out more please email [touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk](mailto:touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk)



**PARABLE**  
INTERACTIVE PERFORMANCE

PARABLE provides primary schools with a visually exciting and imaginative way to boost children's engagement with RE. Adventurous, interactive and exciting, children will encounter and overcome creative challenges, accomplish tasks and influence the outcome of the performance, whilst absorbed in a vibrant world of professional movement, dance and theatre.

PARABLE is a curriculum-based interactive performance and workshop that reimagines religious stories, based on the parables that Jesus told. Children will:

- Take part, watch and learn together.
- Accomplish tasks together by working cooperatively.
- Be part of something and make a difference.
- Overcome challenges.
- Encounter and consider moral quandary.

PARABLE covers a core part of the Religious Education syllabus and is designed to help schools join the dots in pupil's knowledge of Christianity and an important part of its sacred text. "To some young children, their understanding of Jesus is confused - he is born at Christmas and dies three months later at Easter. Some children have little or no knowledge of Jesus' life and teachings." Jane Smith, RE Advisor

PARABLE helps children experience some of the parables that Jesus told, enabling children to engage and reflect on a source of wisdom and sacred text. PARABLE is a great way to ensure depth in the Religious Education curriculum, in line with the new Ofsted criteria. "From the first few minutes (of the) workshop I knew that Springs had something special about them. They just had a way of engaging every child with enthusiasm, passion and hard work. It was faultless." Teacher, St Andrew's, Streatham

Presented by Springs Dance Company  
Watch us in action here: <https://youtu.be/5x3bD4Uzq>

PARABLE can be delivered two or three times in a school day. With sufficient space, the project can be delivered to multiple classes. A day of PARABLE interactive shows costs £625 plus travel. Depending on location, accommodation may be required. To book or for a friendly chat about what we can do for your school, call us on: 07775 426 442 or email: [touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk](mailto:touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk) [www.springsdancecompany.org.uk/reductions/parable](http://www.springsdancecompany.org.uk/reductions/parable)



## God's Planet



**God's Planet**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL AUTUMN TOUR 2024

Early bird discount available until 14th June 2024

"A really wonderful day of fun, laughter & engaging activities all conveying a really important message"  
St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Coventry

"The impact was astounding!"  
Our Lady of the Magnificat, Alcester

"The songs are still being sung in school 2 weeks later!"  
St Augustine's Catholic Academy, Mair

After multiple tours around the country & performing to over 150 schools, we are announcing the **final opportunity** in 2024/25 to book the spectacular **God's Planet Primary School Day!**  
**Dates now available to book October – November 2024**

Click here to watch the God's Planet trailer ...

An exciting, interactive day of performance & workshops for the **whole school** exploring themes around the **environment, climate change, God's love** for each of us & how we can care for God's **AMAZING** planet!



**God's Planet Day Package includes**

- Morning assembly from the RISE team introducing the day
- A classroom activity pack with step-by-step guides for teacher facilitated sessions
- Workshop for KS1 led by RISE Theatre learning songs & dramatic actions
- Workshop for KS2 led by RISE Theatre learning songs & dramatic actions
- Workshop for Reception class led by RISE Theatre learning songs & dramatic actions
- 1 hour afternoon interactive show for the whole school

"God's Planet gave our children a day full of fun and learning. The theme complemented our work on Catholic Social teaching and really brought the theme of 'stewardship' and caring for God's planet alive. The children had a great time!"  
Holy Family School, Witham

**COST AND BOOKING**  
**£600\***  
when booking confirmed before 14th June!  
(\*usually £650)

**For academy & cluster schools:**  
For consecutive bookings of 4 or more schools we can now offer a discounted price of  
**just £499 per school!**

Click here to get in touch and reserve your date now

For venues over 250 miles from our base in Reading, we kindly request an additional contribution to our travel expenses of between £75-100, unless RISE Theatre receives bookings in other schools in your area on consecutive dates.

**RISEtheatre**

A number of schools in the diocese enjoyed an interactive day with 'God's Planet' in the autumn term. Each class is given opportunity in the morning to work with the team to consider some of the issues surrounding care for the planet. In the afternoon pupils work in their class on a creative project linked to the environment. The day rounds off with a whole school collective worship with pupils actively involved using routines and songs learnt in the earlier session. The day focusses on God's love for each of us and how we can care for God's amazing planet.

## Spirited Arts 2024

This competition has inspired so many young people over the years. Have you entered any pupils work for this? Pupils have flexibility in creating their entries:

- Individual, in pairs, or group.
- Entire classes, year groups, or whole school can collaborate.
- Entire community groups.

It is a fantastic cross-curricular opportunity to make Religious Education fun! We welcome entries in (almost!) any art form your pupils can think of, including:

- Art (painting, drawing, sketching, etc)
- Poetry

- Photography
- Dance
- Music
- Drama
- Sculpture

#### Themes for this year

'Faith in humanity' No to racism, yes to respect  
Looking Beyond  
How do we envisage God  
Wise Words, Holy Words  
Green faith: Green Future  
Why do animals matter?

More details at <https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/>

**Closing Date for entries – July 31<sup>st</sup> 2024**

### Cathedral visits

Enhance pupils experience of RE by visiting the Cathedral. The Cathedral in Peterborough is the 'Mother Church' of the diocese. Some of you will know the Cathedral well, perhaps you have attended the annual service there for Church schools? There are many ways in which the Cathedral team offer to support the learning of pupils in RE. The brochure for their work is attached to this newsletter.

Alex, Toni and the team at the Cathedral write:

'We are delighted to share with you our updated school visits programme - a range of exciting and engaging activities using the Cathedral as an inspirational resource! Highlights for church schools include:

- Our 'Exploring' and 'Understanding' sessions, aimed at supporting the Understanding Christianity framework. Themes currently offered are Salvation, Creation, Incarnation and God
- Bespoke days - created with whole school visits in mind. These can be delivered on a variety of themes including 'Our Mother Church' - -getting to know your Cathedral and its part in the wider diocesan family!

In addition, our fabulous History activities will support the teaching of Saxons, Tudors and Local History

[https://www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk/userfiles/SchoolVisitBrochure24\\_A4\\_12pp\[53\].pdf](https://www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk/userfiles/SchoolVisitBrochure24_A4_12pp[53].pdf)

### October 3rd Diocesan Schools' Service at Peterborough Cathedral

Although this special service takes place in the mid-afternoon, we are mindful that many schools are involved and will be spending the whole day at the Cathedral. With that in mind we will be delivering a range of short, fun activities aimed at helping children to better understand their





Mother Church! Activities will focus on the Cathedral's history, it's importance as a place of Christian worship and will explore the links with your school. All are welcome to take part in these activities which will be on offer around the building between 10am and 2pm however we need schools to book as soon as possible so we can confirm the numbers and logistics.

If schools can make a small contribution towards the costs of the resources we will be using, we would be very grateful (suggested donation £2per child), but we understand that with coach travel this might not be possible.

We encourage you to get in touch with us directly to find out more and make a reservation.

[schoolvisits@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:schoolvisits@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk)

**And finally...**

Do please continue to share the great RE work that is going on in your schools. I would love to hear from you and to include it in future newsletters.

Please also send me an email about resources that you have found useful in RE in your school. Again, these can be included in the Resources section and they might just be the resource that someone else is looking for!

I hope to see you at the next **Primary RE subject leader's network** meeting on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June from 4.00pm**. We will take some time to discuss the implementation of the Diocesan Syllabus and especially focus on progression in the RE curriculum. We can also discuss at that meeting any further training requests that it might be possible to include in the 2024/25 training programme. Please let **Alex Benoy** know if you are able to attend to be sure you receive the zoom link for the meeting.

**Jane Lewis**  
**7.5.2024**